

## CHARLIE'S TURNAROUND

## His move to Piedmont Crossing reunites family, brings peace of mind

n late December of 2018, Charlie Hoffmann was recently widowed, living in Connecticut, and in rehab. It wasn't going well. He was having issues with his legs and toes, he was grieving, and although his daughter, Debbie, was visiting from California and providing support, Charlie was struggling.

The family knew that Charlie needed a change to improve his well-being, so his kids came together and offered him the opportunity to relocate near one of them in Arizona, California, Florida, or North Carolina. After thinking through the scenarios, Charlie opted for North Carolina, where his son Jeff and daughter-in-law Marcia lived at Piedmont Crossing.

With Charlie on board, the couple reached out to the leadership team to explore the possibilities. Although Charlie was being treated through an IV and had MRSA, the clinical team agreed to admit him to rehab, with the understanding that he would become a full-fledged resident at Piedmont based on whatever level of care he ultimately needed.



Charlie with Piedmont Crossing rehab nurse, Angela.

## The journey begins

Charlie's grueling trip by medical transport took 13 hours, and both patient and family were exhausted when he arrived. But in the coming days, Charlie began to settle in, and his condition improved. One nurse in particular, Angela, gave him tough love, and he gave it right back with a grin. People at Piedmont Crossing responded to his good nature, and week after week, he regained his health and staming.

While Charlie was recuperating in rehab, a studio apartment became available, so he signed for it, and Jeff and Marcia readied it for him, anticipating his eventual discharge. Finally, in February, he left rehab and moved in to his own home, in good shape and good spirits.

## A new lease on life

Four years later, Charlie has lots of friends and is noticeably social. He has blossomed in his new surroundings, and people who knew him before are pleasantly surprised by his optimistic outlook. He feels better physically and emotionally and has an unmistakable peace of mind. While his family no longer see him every day like they did when he was in rehab, everyone feels comfortable with their own lives and their proximity to each other. Charlie comes to Jeff and Marcia's villa for holidays, but otherwise, they go to visit him.

These days, Charlie gets to his meals using a walker and often goes early to chat with other residents. He attends the men's coffee on Monday mornings, enjoys movie day, and plays Bingo regularly. (He likes winning candy and stakes out his favorite seat each time!) On his floor near the activity room, there's a selection of exercise equipment, and he uses the recumbent bike frequently. He also does physical therapy, as he's been advised.

Charlie and his children visit a local vineyard.

Socialization helps maintain Charlie's good health, and Daphne Jenkins, the residents' concierge, keeps him and the rest of the folks engaged. Charlie has committed to the community's lifestyle and makes the most of it. He has a large circle of friends and sits with them at dinner regularly, holding court from one end of the table while his friend Austin anchors the other end. He also enjoys sitting in the sun on the front porch, rocking and chatting before and after dinner.

During his time at Piedmont Crossing, Charlie has returned to rehab several times – to treat fractures in his hips and for recovery after getting a pacemaker. But health issues are to be expected when life is long and well-lived, and as Marcia comments, "That's the





Celebrating with family at Piedmont Crossing.

advantage of being here. If you get injured or have a medical need, rehab is well-equipped to get you back in shape." And when there's a level of comfort with your environment and a trust in the staff and the support you receive, stays in rehab are more productive and less stressful. The continuum of care is seamless, just as intended.

Now, with Charlie healthy and content, all four of his kids are relieved, pleased, and thankful that Jeff and Marcia are close and accessible. Although the circumstances of getting Charlie to rehab at Piedmont Crossing were tougher than anyone imagined, his family hoped that everything would be fine in the long run. Happily on the other side of that turmoil, Marcia reflects on the events from four years ago with a satisfied smile and a gentle release of breath, saying, "We trusted that it would work out, and it did."



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veryAge is a sustaining partner of Adult Children of Aging Parents (ACAP), a community-based organization founded in Hickory, NC, in 2012. The nonprofit has chapters throughout North Carolina and Pennsylvania and is expanding both west and south to other states.

ACAP hosts educational programs that offer information, resources, support, and community for adult-children as they care for their aging parents and themselves. Programs are virtual and in-person right now, and two chapters serve the Triad: the Guilford County chapter (info@ACAPGuilfordCounty.org) and the Winston-Salem chapter (info@ACAPWinston-Salem.org).

All of the programs are free and open to the public. They address topics like driving and aging, advance care planning, falls prevention, caregiver fatigue, residential options for seniors, and practical tips for caregivers. Online videos, podcasts, and articles are available as well.

To view an events calendar or to learn more, visit www.acapcommunity.org or www.facebook.com/ACAPcommunity.

ACAP events are also shared at www.facebook.com/PiedmontCrossing.



